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USCINCENT//CCPA, USCENCOM REAR MACDILL AFB FL
STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON 9/11 ANNIVERSARY

Summary

-- Lead stories in all papers published today, September 12, highlight the world's commemoration of the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Other lead stories include the resignation of the Palestinian cabinet and the announcement that Palestinian general elections will be held on January 20. Amidst reports about Iraq's "grave threat" and the U.S. determination to "remove" this threat, all papers highlight U.N. Secretary General Annan's remarks saying that only the Security Council could provide the legitimacy needed to be able to act against threats to international peace.

Editorial Commentary

-- "Bush's speech and the inspiration of bloody Tuesday"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (09/12) editorializes: "Many observers did not hide their conviction that marking the 9/11 anniversary in this impressive way, amid heightened military conditions, actually befits the condition of current U.S. policy, particularly towards Iraq. We truly hope that Washington will listen to reason, and will adopt dialogue instead of the language of power that it is using. Beating the American drums of war will lead the international community and all anti-war forces to intensify their efforts in order to avoid a disaster, and to the Arab nation to do everything possible to spare Iraq and the region the dangers of a military strike."

-- "September 11"

Daily columnist Urayb Rintawi writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (09/12): "Why do they hate us? What is our responsibility for what is happening to us? (these are) Two questions that have not yet been answered, although a whole year has already passed since the 'day that changed the world'. We enter the second year since the attacks amidst the beating of the drums of war against Iraq and the turning away from international legitimacy. Meanwhile, we have not heard a single word that would suggest self-evaluation on the part of the United States."

-- "Times of memory"

Daily columnist Mohammad Kawash writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (09/12): "The memory of September 11 is going to have an especially sad effect on every American, because the American people are the ones that have lost and have been hurt. That is why we say that it is the American people's right to ask their government and their leadership: why? It is the right of the Americans to know that their leadership is ruling the world but not leading it; that it is a biased and unfair administration when it comes to executing its policies; that that is why the September disaster happened. We had hoped that the memory of September 11 would be the beginning of a change that would start in Washington."

-- "A media war in another confrontation"

Chief Editor Taher Udwan writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (09/12): "The unprecedented coverage provided for September 11 by the American media established that day as a day of 'disaster' in the minds and hearts of the American people. Al-Qa'eda and Osama Bin Laden,

too, have not missed this opportunity to underscore the confrontation between the United States and the Arabs and Muslims. Watching the political and media coverage of the commemoration of September 11 in New York shows the negative and bitter effects of the attacks on the American people. World opinion understands this, because, even after one year, the wound is still fresh. However, it is dangerous for the future of Arab- and Islamic-American relations to dedicate the memory of these events in the same way as the Holocaust, which Zionism used to keep the struggle going in Palestine and to obtain American and European support. If America really wants to assume its responsibilities in this world, it must contain this loose and vague struggle before it turns into a real clash of the civilizations."
-- "By the way"

Daily columnist Tarek Masarweh writes on the back-page of semi-official Arabic daily Al-Ra'i (09/12):
"Unfortunately, the earthquake [9/11 attacks] was not enough to force American policy to use its brains instead of its muscles. The forces of savage abuse, monopoly, and religious and ethnic bigotry jumped on the wave and turned this big, rich country into blind force. We see the outcome of that in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. The United States may be the strongest power ever known to the world, but no one is afraid. Those who have no faith in their [Arab] nation, so much so that they doubt that an Arab could do what the Al-Qa'eda men have done, should believe: this nation will never die."

BERRY